

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 8, with the following paragraph:

– - Some instruments such as surgical staplers and those having diameters up to about 37 mm or more have been too large for trocar access. Furthermore, present trocar seals typically require two valves, one for forming an instrument seal in the presence of the instrument, and the other for forming a zero seal in the absence of the instrument. Accordingly, there is a need in the art for a surgical access device that can function both as a zero seal and as an instrument seal, and that can accommodate a wide range of instruments having diameters up to about 37 mm or more. – -

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 18, with the following paragraph:

– - The deficiencies of the prior art are overcome with the present invention which includes a seal apparatus. In one embodiment, the device includes a valve structure formed of a gel including, for example, a thermoplastic base such as KRATON® and an oil. The resulting elastomer has excellent tear strength, high elongation, a very low durometer or hardness, and biocompatibility. The access device can function both as a zero seal and as an instrument seal. Furthermore, it can accommodate a full range of instruments having diameters up to about 37 mm or more. In another embodiment, several

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instruments of smaller diameter can be accommodated at the same time with a single access device.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 1, with the following paragraph:

-- In order to accommodate a wide range of instruments, a small incision 50 is typically created in the abdominal wall 25. An access device 55 of the present invention can be provided to further facilitate insertion of wide instruments such as those having diameters up to about 37 mm or more --

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 23 under the heading "ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE" with the following paragraph:

--A surgical access device includes a single valve that forms a seal with a body wall and provides an access channel into a body cavity. The valve has properties for creating a zero seal in the absence of an instrument as well as an instrument seal for an instrument having a diameter up to about 37 mm or more. The valve can include a gel material and the access channel can include a protective sleeve to provide for wound protection during insertion and withdrawal of a sharp surgical instrument. The valve further comprises a cap ring which may be inserted or molded with the gel material. The protective sleeve may be bonded or molded around an inner diameter of the cap ring. The protective sleeve may be a single tubular member, or may comprise a plurality of axially

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extending sleeve members having a plurality of axial slits. The protective sleeve and the cap ring may comprise of the same or different materials. The surgical access device further comprises at least one support ring disposed circumferentially of the valve forming a hollow space, and a wound retractor operatively placed in the hollow space. The wound retractor includes an inner ring, an outer ring, and a flexible sleeve connecting the inner ring and the outer ring.--